

Chapter 3 Women

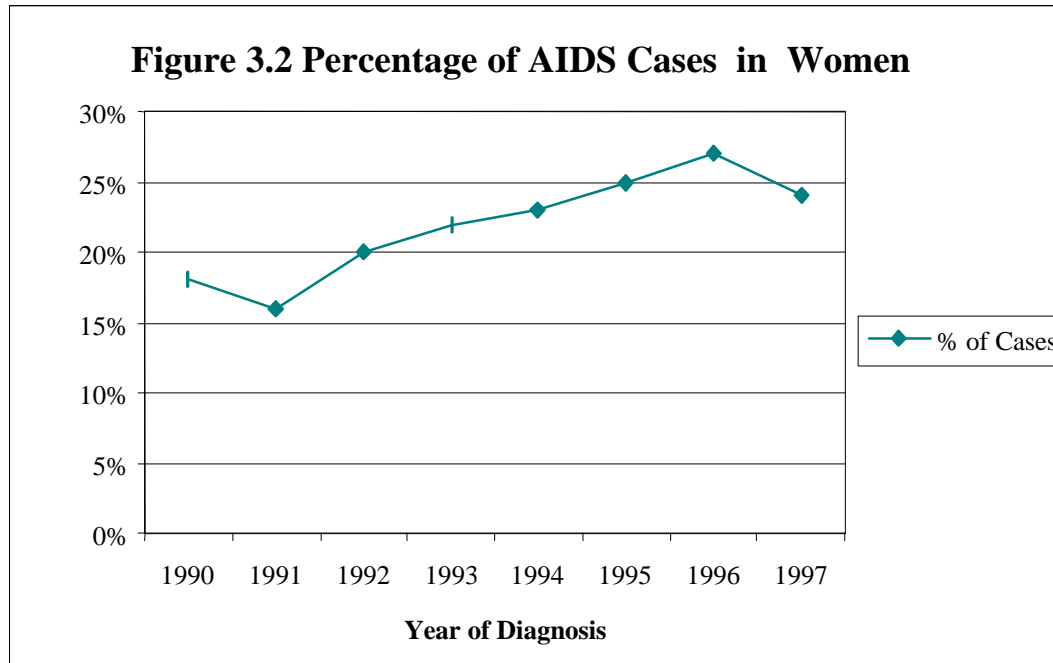
- Women have accounted for approximately 25% of AIDS cases reported in each of the past three years; this represents roughly a 10% increase in annual reports.
- The mode of transmission among women differs by race.
- Black and Hispanic women are more likely to be diagnosed in the under 24 age group than White women.

Women continue to account for a growing proportion of diagnosed AIDS cases. As of 7/1/98, Women represent 24% of all alive cases. Figure 3.1 summarizes alive AIDS cases in Massachusetts among women.

Figure 3.1 Alive AIDS Cases by Age Category, Race/Ethnicity, and Transmission Mode for Women

Alive Cases of AIDS in Women (Alive as of 7/1/98) N=1169	
Age Category (years)	
0-12	32 (3%)
13-24	75 (6%)
25-44	937 (80%)
45+	125 (11%)
Race/Ethnicity	
White	435 (37%)
Black	421 (36%)
Hispanic	306 (26%)
Other	7 (1%)
Transmission Mode	
IDU	542 (46%)
Total HTSX	405 (35%)
HTSX w/IDU	200 (17%)
HTSX w/ Person w/ HIV/AIDS	182 (16%)
Other HTSX	23 (2%)
Presumed HTSX	133 (11%)
Other	89 (7%)

Forty six percent of women living with AIDS were reported with injecting drug use as a primary risk, compared to 37% of men. An additional 20% were reported having sex with a person with or at high risk for HIV infection as their primary risk. For example, sex with an injecting drug user is reported in 54% of cases among women with heterosexual sex as the primary mode of infection. As a result, 66% percent of alive AIDS cases among women are ascribed to their own injecting drug use or that of a sexual partner. Not surprisingly, women make up a greater proportion of cases in areas where injecting drug use is the primary mode of transmission.



Figures 3.3 – 3.6 contrast the modes of transmission among women alive with AIDS by race. White women are almost twice as likely as Black and Hispanic women to be infected through injection drug use. Conversely, Black and Hispanic women are nearly twice as likely to acquire AIDS heterosexually than are White women.

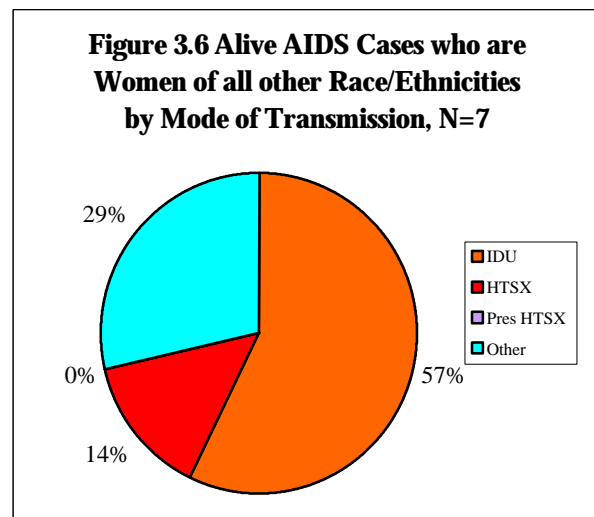
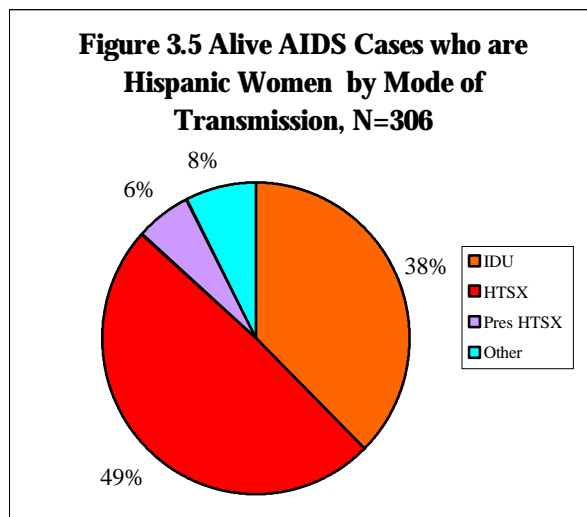
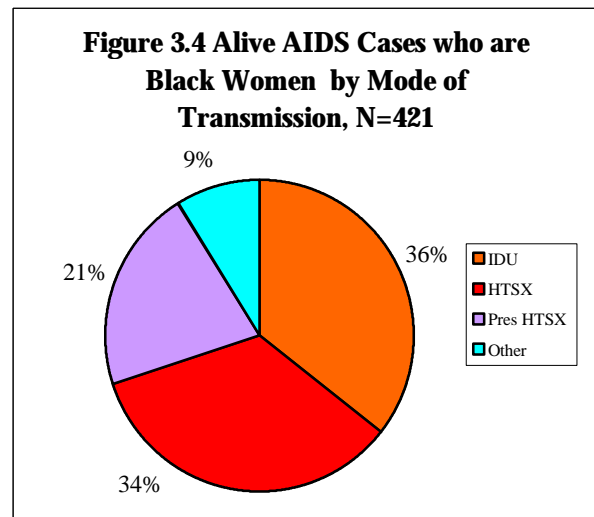
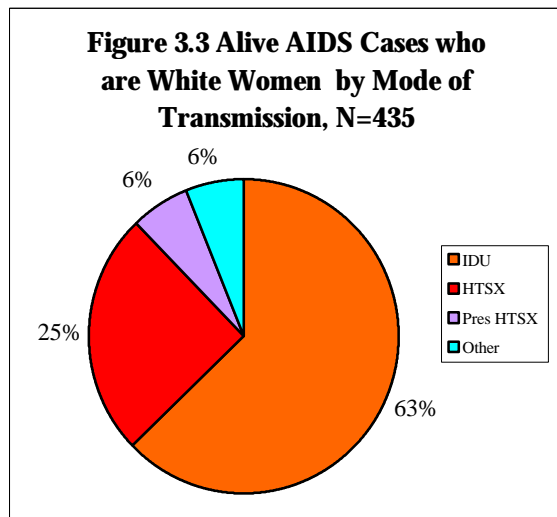
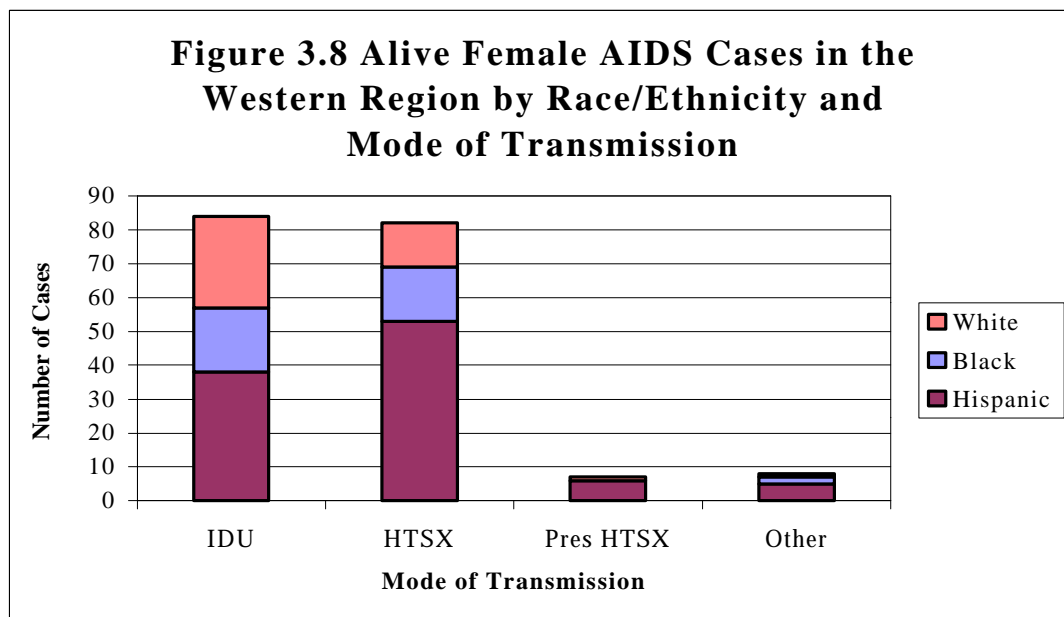


Figure 3.7 shows alive AIDS cases who are women by age category at diagnosis and race/ethnicity. The age distribution is quite similar among Black and Hispanic women with AIDS.

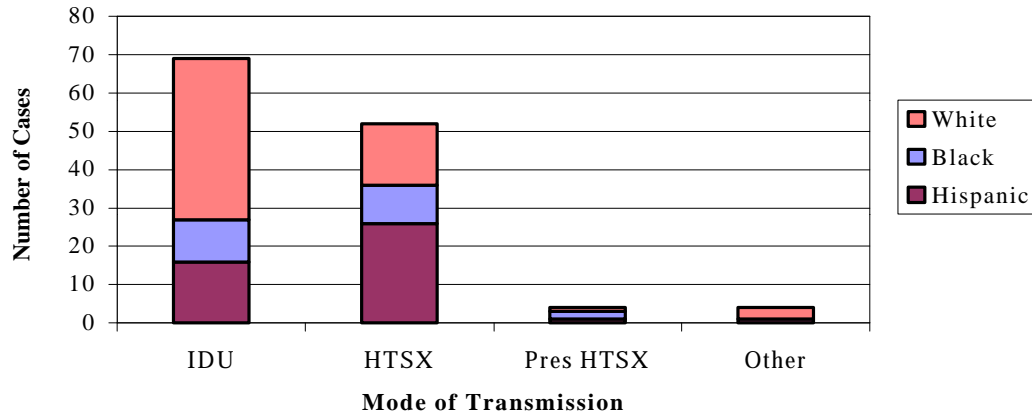
Figure 3.7 Alive Female AIDS Cases by Age Category and Race/Ethnicity (Percentages Refer to Age Category as % of Race/Ethnicity)						
Age	White		Black		Hispanic	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
13-24	20	5%	33	8%	22	7%
25-44	374	86%	319	76%	238	78%
45+	35	8%	53	13%	36	12%
Total	435		421		306	

The following figures describe the AIDS epidemic among women in Massachusetts by region. As illustrated in Figures 3.8 through 3.13, the number of alive AIDS cases varies significantly by race/ethnicity and mode of transmission among health service regions.



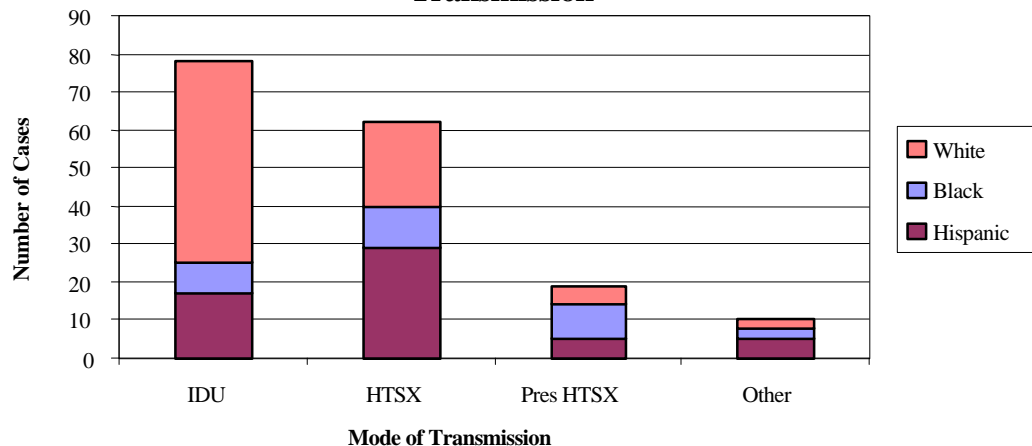
- In the Western Region, the absolute number of cases attributed to injection drug use and heterosexual sex are nearly equal.
- Hispanics are disproportionately represented among all modes of transmission.
- Hispanic women account for the vast majority of cases among both heterosexual and presumed heterosexual transmission cases.

Figure 3.9 Alive Female AIDS Cases in the Central Region by Race/Ethnicity and Mode of Transmission

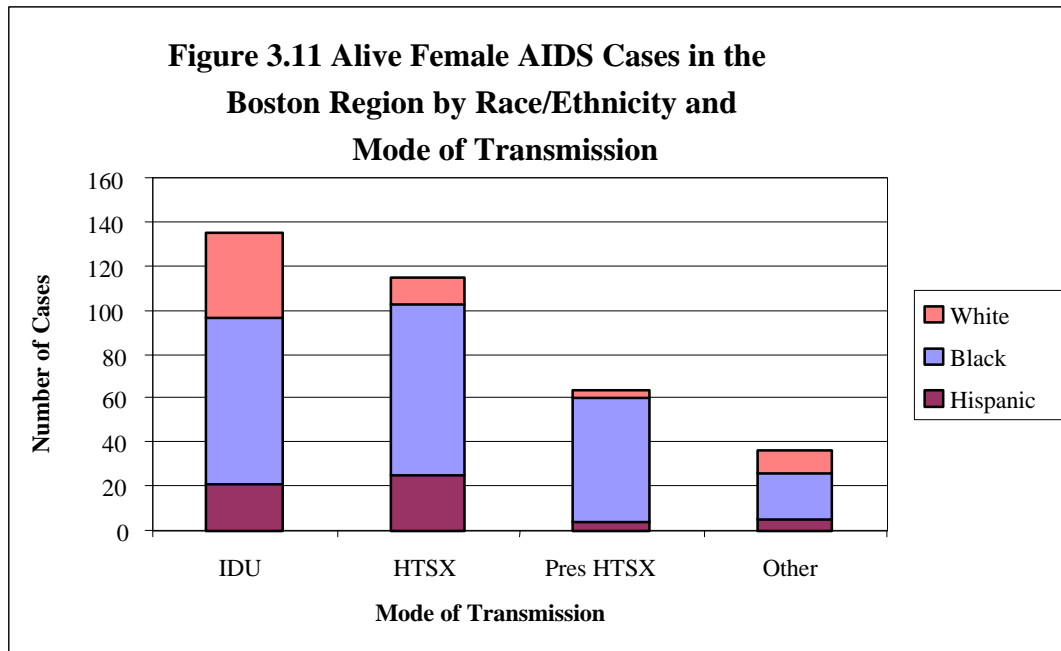


- White women in the Central region account for the majority of injecting drug use cases reported in that region.
- The absolute number of heterosexual cases in Hispanic women is more than that for both Whites and Blacks combined.
- The Central region reports the lowest percentage and absolute number of presumed heterosexual cases among women.

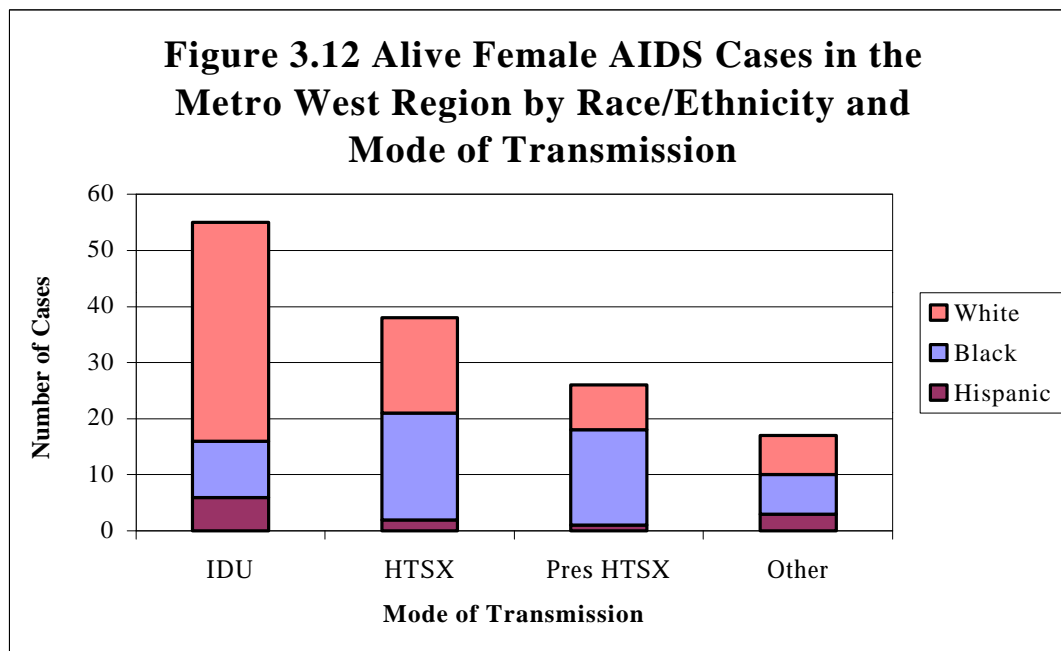
Figure 3.10 Alive Female AIDS Cases in the Northeast Region by Race/Ethnicity and Mode of Transmission



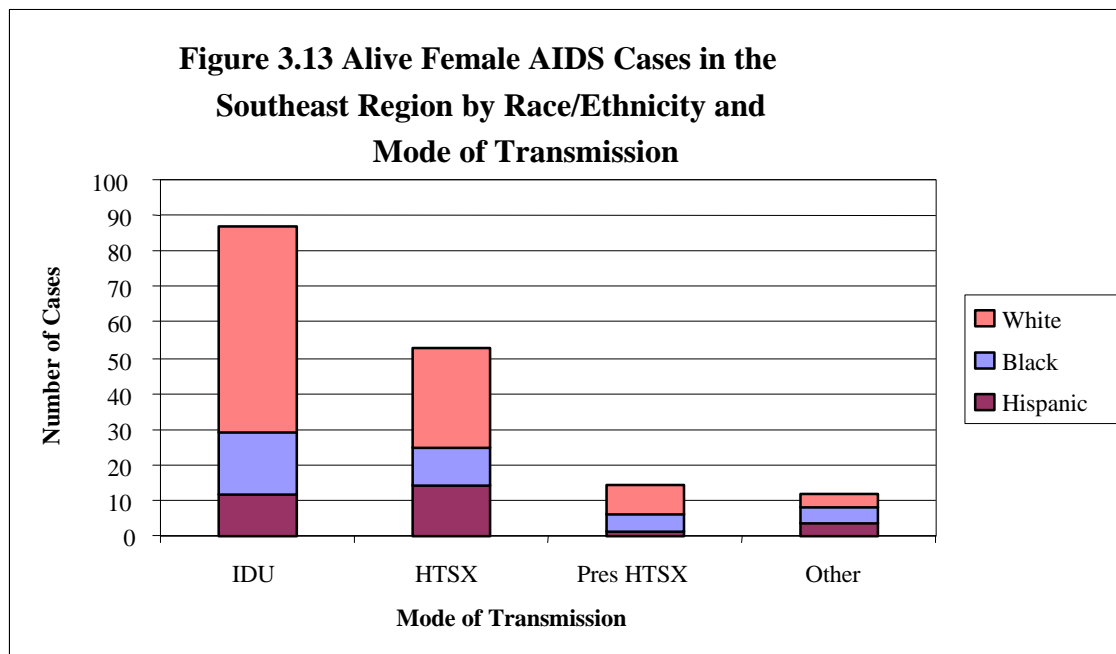
- Almost half of heterosexual cases are among Hispanic women.
- White women in the Northeast region account for the majority of injecting drug use cases among women.
- Black women account for nearly half of the presumed heterosexual cases among women.



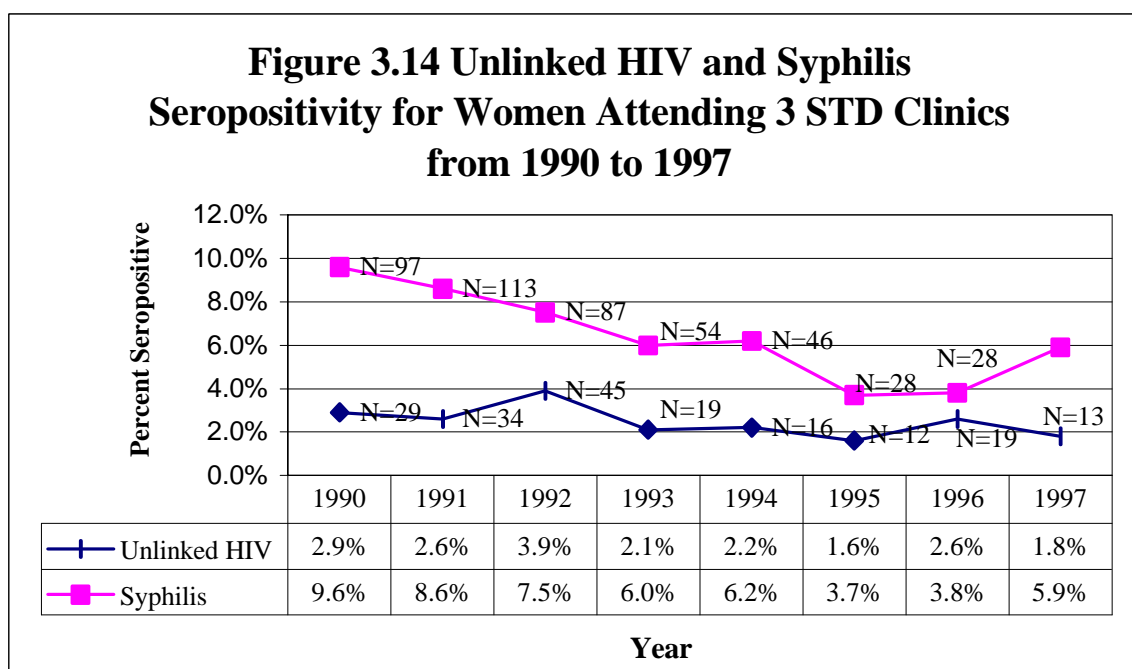
- Black women account for almost 90% of presumed heterosexual, 68% of heterosexual, and 56% of injecting drug use cases.
- Heterosexual and presumed heterosexual cases combined exceed the number of injecting drug use cases by 11%.



- The number of heterosexual and presumed heterosexual cases combined exceeds those of injecting drug use cases.
- More than half of the heterosexual and presumed heterosexual cases are among Black women.



- Injecting drug use is the primary mode of transmission in the Southeast Region.
- After the Boston Region, the Southeast Region has the largest number of women injecting drug users with AIDS.



Unlinked HIV seropositivity among female clients of these three STD clinics has been approximately two percent over the past few years.

Of those women who tested at publicly-funded Counseling and Testing sites in 1997, seropositivity among Black women was more than 11 times that of White women. Hispanic women were six times more likely than White women to be HIV positive. Seropositivity rates differ between White women and women of color within certain age categories. For example, for women aged 45 and older, although six times as many White women tested as Black women, Black women were 26 times as likely to test positive.

Figure 3.15 Trends in Seropositivity from Publicly Funded Counseling and Testing for Women by Age and Race/Ethnicity, 1997

Age	White		Black		Hispanic		Other/Unknown	
	N	% +	N	% +	N	% +	N	% +
13-24	3636	(0.05%)	616	(1.3%)	1612	(0.9%)	738	(0.8%)
25-44	4422	(0.6%)	955	(4.7%)	1933	(2.5%)	919	(2.4%)
45+	599	(0.2%)	97	(5.2%)	198	(3.5%)	95	(1.1%)
Total*	8745	(0.3%)	1696	(3.4%)	3808	(1.8%)	1780	(1.6%)

* Those with no age reported are included in Total

Injecting drug use continues to be the predominant mode of HIV transmission among women in Massachusetts. However, since 1993, of women testing at publicly funded C&T sites, the majority who test positive report sex with a person with HIV/AIDS as their primary risk. As illustrated in Figure 3.16 the percentage of women who test positive reporting their primary risk as injection drug use or sex with an injection drug user has actually decreased from 1992 to 1997.

Figure 3.16 Trends in Seropositivity in Women by Reported Risk from Publicly Funded Counseling and Testing Sites by Year

